

FRANK LESLIE'S

CENTRAL LIFE OF ABRAHAM LINCOLN.

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LIFE OF ABRAHAM LINCOLN.

THE NINETEENTH PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES.

(With many beautiful portraits, and many other illustrations.)

It has never before been the opportunity of the people of the United States to stand in the presence of their Chief Magistrate hurried on by the force of the nation. One after another those who had realized the destinies of the country, the great citizens chosen to hold for a season the position that made them the equals of any and the superiors of most kings, retired, leaving the nation to the choice of their own destinies, and as death has come to call them to their own, the nation has paid its tribute of grief. Twice before, death has shaken the White House, when Providence called away almost in the outset of their administrations, Presidents whose age could not have kept up against the exhausting duties of the ruler of a mighty empire.

New the nation shudders as it gazes on the face of ABRAHAM LINCOLN, the sixteenth President of the United States, as he lies calm and still, his face showing the violence of which he was a victim. Slavery has wrought its last crime; striking at the national existence in legislative conventions; then by sudden military movement, by a deadly war, and falling in all, it illuminates the way of a country, true-hearted, earnest, the man, of all men living, nearest to the heart of the American people.

Spring from the people, with no unusual name or services, with none of the salaries which wealth, social position, or academic honors afford other aspirants to public honors, ABRAHAM LINCOLN rose step by step to the highest station. His kindly nature, his joyful disposition, his freedom from all affectation or attempt to appear other than he was, at first prophetic of those who had not studied the man or his career, and who failed to recognize his sound sense, his sterling integrity, his breadth and comprehensiveness of view, his unselfish, prudent course directed to the greatest restoration of national happiness. Amidst the best of party sympathies, which in our land has no check but time, Mr. Lincoln has been heartily assisted. We should think to ascribe on this scroll the epithet with which many papers have so recently coupled the name of the Chief Magistrate, but when the nation's hand outstretches to him, even now awake, and firm and set for all "deposed," there is no more way to rest against the great man of the country, one to fill the place of the lonely, unassuming, self-sustaining man.

His life is then a study for the American people and for the whole world. He was no common man whose loss is deplored; he was no common man whose loss is a ruler choosing action sees no one to fill in its course or its action.

The Lincoln family were Virginians, although said to be sprung from a Quaker family of the name, early settled in Berks County, Pennsylvania. His grandfather and namesake, Abraham Lincoln, was, however, born in Rockingham County, Virginia, the eldest of five brothers. Soon after the House had explored the land of Kentucky, then a outlying wilderness within the bounds of his native state, Abraham Lincoln was one of the best of settler pioneers, who, unharmed and unsmiling, pushed westward to find a high toned State. The young pioneer settled, it is supposed, on Floyd's Creek, but before he could see his labors crowned by success, or a home blooming in the wilderness, full of the seeds of the Revolution, he found Indian raid, killed and snatched by the savages.

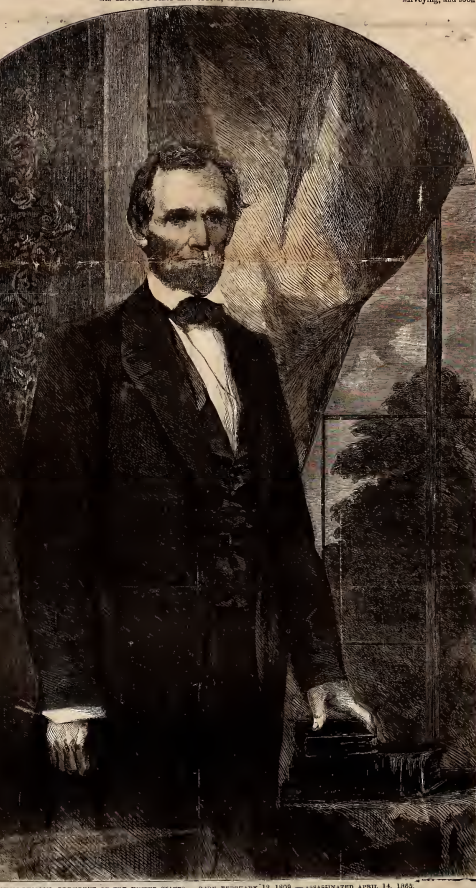
Thomas, the youngest of his sons, then, deposed of a father's care, fought his battle of life, struggling bravely against the disadvantages, which, in a slave State, crushed the poor white beggary to the earth. He married Lucy Hanks, in 1806, and settled in Hardin County. Here on a homestead, a mile above Hodgenville, and on the banks of Noble Creek, ABRAHAM LINCOLN was born on the 12th of February, 1809, and remained until his sixth year, when his father removed to a new town, a few miles from the same town of Hodgenville.

Young ABRAHAM had but just begun to con, under the village teachers, Hays and Hays, an old family spelling-book, when his father, despairing of success in the battle of life, sold all he had and made his way into the wilds of Spencer County. In Illinois, actually, for a part of the march, following his way through the primitive, pathless forest.

Here, ABRAHAM, though but a boy of eight, added his father to the log-chains which for the next twelve years was his home. His mother, a woman of piety and devotion, was his teacher in the rudiments



MR. LINCOLN'S FIRST LAW OFFICE, SPRINGFIELD, ILL.



ABRAHAM LINCOLN, PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES.—BORN FEBRUARY 12, 1809.—ASSASSINATED APRIL 14, 1865.

of learning, and he had acquired a knowledge of reading, and writing when he was called upon to address a traveling preacher and invite him to come and preach a sermon over the grave of the mother whom he loved.

Neither father nor son neglected the rare opportunities of advancement that occurred in the backwoods. The school that started young ABRAHAM as an early scholar; the books discovered in neighbors' cellars were soon his hard-earned property. They removed once more, and a firm near Decatur, Illinois, became their home. After seeing his father established, helping to break the ground, and above all, making the soil fertile which has become historical, he started at the age of twenty-one in his career as a lawyer, with little education, but with a trade or profession, with really but his own indomitable energy and a faint knowledge of purpose.

The Black Hawk War gave him his first position. Though but a farm hand and at best a clerk in a country store and mill at New Salem, he had impressed his fellow-men as one born to command. He was made Captain of a volunteer company and discharged his duties so well that when the brief hostilities were ended, the Captain became a candidate for the Legislature, and though he failed to secure an election, received out of nearly three hundred votes in his own precinct all but seven. Meanwhile his studies went on, steadily and earnestly. Aided by Collins, who in later days figures in the troubles of Kansas, LINCOLN learned surveying, and soon had an extensive business, the more necessary now that an experiment in buying a store on his own account had failed.

In 1834 he was elected to the Legislature, and at the close of the first session, having resolved to adopt the highest professional standard, devoted himself to study. Having been admitted to the bar in 1836, he removed to Springfield in April of the following year, and commenced the practice of the law as a partner of Hon. John T. Stuart, in the modest office which our readers will examine with the interest that new, more than ever, attaches to all connected with the martyred President.

The first office where Mr. Lincoln began practice as a member of the firm of Stuart & Lincoln, was in a very humble office in Hoffman's Row. At a later period he removed to more comfortable quarters in Fifth Street, west of State Square, where, at the time of his nomination, he had associated with him a Mr. Herndon.

After being three times successively elected to the Legislature of Illinois, and there on two occasions being the Whig candidate for Speaker, Mr. LINCOLN retired for a time from public life, devoting himself to his increasing practice at the bar, in which his remarkable ability won him reputation and competency. As an advocate he was earnest and sincere, strictly honest, and carrying to the hearts of the jurors a conviction of his own integrity and the justice of any cause which he supported; while in his arguments with opposing counsel he was remarkable for logical skill, quickness of conception, ready wit, and not the least important, a thorough study and preparation of his case, in which his antagonists always found him fully armed. Yet he could not withdraw entirely from the political field; a warm adherent from boyhood of Henry Clay, and inasmuch a Whig, he ardently supported the State of Illinois in 1844. Three years later he took his seat in Congress, the only Whig representative from that State.

In this new and higher field, in the legislative branch of that great government over which he was to preside in his briefest hour, Mr. LINCOLN stood with his usual honesty of purpose. Believing the Mexican War to have been unjust and needless, he never forbore to express this opinion by his vote, and directly by resolution called for information from the President to show that Mexico, as asserted, had shed the blood of our citizens on our own soil, justly maintaining that the battle-fields had been Spanish and Mexican, and never Texan soil. But while he censured the course of the war, he never sought to visit their sin on the soldiers; he never attempted by his vote to deprive the soldier of his pay or supplies.

The question of Slavery, to which he was to give the final solution, came up during his term of service in Congress, and LINCOLN, having been born in a slave State, and called from it by slavery, it is not surprising to find him an outspoken antagonist of the system. He introduced an amendment to a proposed bill, which, it was said, abolished slavery in the District of Columbia, and voted for the Wilson Proviso, whenever it came in any form before the House. The role of a western pioneer, he advocated giving the public lands not to speculators, but to actual settlers. In other great questions of the day, he took the ground held by the leaders of his party.

On Friday night, April 14, 1865, the anniversary of the fall of Fort Sumter, which opened the war, and while Maj. Anderson was actually over the roof of the flag of the United States over the recovered ruins, when the war was virtually closed, and a part more in union to his kindly heart lay before him, a man named Lincoln was suddenly cut down by the hand of a cowardly assassin; and an attack more dastardly still was made on the life of Mr. Seward, Secretary of State, who lay on a bed of pain from previous injury accidentally received. Evidence shows that Lieut. General Grant, the Vice-President, and the President were also marked out for slaughter, but the hand of Providence averted the blow.

The chief theatre at Washington was under the management of John T. Ford. He had placed a private box at the disposal of the President, who occasionally occupied it, to enjoy a momentary relaxation amid the engrossing duties of his station.

The night of the 14th was to be the benefit of Miss Laura Keane, and the President, Lieut. General Grant, and other prominent men, were invited to be present. Whether this was part of the plan to draw the victim to the spot, or whether the plot was formed in this knowledge, is not yet ascertained; but it is evident that John Wilkes Booth, an actor who had performed at that theatre and knew its whole interior and external arrangement, seemed or was chosen for the deed of blood, and during the day made all preparations to ensure the certainty of the blow, and his own escape.

The private box adjacent the dress circle, and but two doors, as it was at times by a partition converted into two boxes, these doors opened into a dark passage, closed by a door at the end of the dress circle. During the day, or previously, John Wilkes Booth, a son of the celebrated English actor, and his accomplices, had bored a hole in the box door, enlarged by a gun-hole on the inside sufficiently to enable him to survey the position of the parties within at the moment of action. The hinges of the door, which were on the inside of the box doors had been weakened by partly withdrawing the screws, so that a

man could easily pry open, if forced. These were not the only preparations. The very arrangement of the chairs and sofa in the box was evidently part of the plan, and the work of Booth or a confederate among those employed in the theatre. It gave an unobstructed passage from the door to the President, throwing the others at a considerable distance from him, and in positions not to observe an entrance. Mr. Lincoln's chair was placed in the front corner of the box, farthest from the stage. That of Mrs. Lincoln was more remote from the

front; the other chairs and a sofa being on the side near the stage, to leave the center clear for the assassin.

Booth had also provided a board, to prevent the passage door being opened from the outside, and made a hole in the wall to enable him to lean against the door. For the fearful act, he armed himself with a silver-mounted Deringer pistol and a bow-knife. During a recent visit to Boston, he had practiced at Floyd & Edwards' gallery, shooting between his legs, behind his neck, and in other strange positions.

For the escape he had no less carefully provided. He hired a stable in the alley in the rear of the theatre, and on Friday afternoon hired of James Fumphy a fine boy

opening of the theatre he doubtless got his horse ready, and prepared the doors in the rear, after which he was motioned across the front of the theatre.

But we will now follow President Lincoln in the events of his last day, closed with such appalling misadventure.

His son, Captain Robert Lincoln, who had been on Lieut. General Grant's staff, had just returned from Lincoln's expedition, and breakfasted with the President, who seemed remarkably cheerful and happy. After spending some time with his family, he received Speaker Colfax, Mr. Hale, and some others, and at eleven o'clock met his Cabinet and Lieut. General Grant, where the future policy of the Administration was harmoniously agreed upon.

He had been already described. Hon. Mr. Lincoln took the cushioned arm-chair placed for him, Mrs. Lincoln occupying the seat next, while Miss Harris sat at the side, and Maj. Rathbone on the sofa behind her.

Nothing occurred to excite suspicion or remark till the second scene of the play set, when Hawthorne, who was part of Asa Trevelard, was alone on the stage, leaving it almost perfectly clear. Booth was then seen speaking to the President's attendants at the door of the passage, into which he passed, and silently closed it with the handle. He then entered the State box, and approaching the President shot him in the back of the head. The report started Major Rathbone, who rushed on the assassin and seized him,

but Booth aimed a deadly blow at the Major's breast, so parry which he had to loose his hold. Receiving a severe wound on the arm he was unable to grapple him again, so Booth sprang to the edge of the box and thence to the stage, about nine feet below. He fell on the stage, dropping his hat and spear, which hung in the flag hanging from the box; but he was up in a moment, and flourishing his knife, cried: "Six Steps Tyranny." While all were looking in amazement he dashed across the stage, recognized by Mr. Hawke, and pointing aside Miss Laura Keane, who was in the place temporarily known as the former, near the prompter's desk, and on the northern side of the theatre, passed around the scenes to the rear of the theatre. Here there were two doors, and Booth passed through the smaller. One man only, J. B. Stevens, a member of the Washington bar, was so near him that Booth actually shot the door in his face. The delay of a few seconds, which it required Stevens to open the door, enabled the murderer to run down a rear alley, in the rear, to its junction with another, where he had previously placed his horse, and thrusting aside the boy holding it, sprang into the saddle and galloped through another alley into F street, and disappeared in the darkness.

We now return to his illustrious victim. As the moment when he was shot, Mr. Lincoln was leaning with his head on his hand in a careless strolling habit, and his eyes fixed on the play. When the fatal ball, sped with such fatal momentary, entered his brain, his head sunk forward, but so early escaped his lips, and no blood issued from the wound. This, and the centering of all attention on the murderer, prevented alarm near enough to bring about the first fatal result; but Major Rathbone's suspicion was confirmed by the surgeons admitted.

Mrs. Lincoln, realizing her own imminent peril, screamed and swooned. The whole theatre was now in a wild excitement and uproar; threats against the assassin, attempts to pursue him, to see the President were made on all sides. Amid this turmoil, the party in the box, when Miss Keane had

master, which he took to the stable, employing Spangler, the stage computer, to watch it, hoping it would be killed.

During the day he was excited and restless, and was in and out of the National Hotel, where he boarded. In the afternoon he apparently attempted to begin by assassinating Vice-President Johnson, for he called at the Kirkwood House, and sent up his card: "I don't wish to disturb you, but would be glad to have an interview; J. Wilkes Booth." But Mr. Johnson was absent.

He returned to his own hotel, and after a brief absence was there again at ten, and immediately left. After the

In the afternoon and towards evening he received others, and when the hour to attend the theatre arrived, he felt reluctant to go, but as Lieut. Genl. Grant had been called from the city, he went, not to displease the public. Speaker Colfax, and Mr. Adams, of Massachusetts, were with him just before he left the house, and the President made an appointment with the latter for the next morning.

On leaving the White House, Mr. and Mrs. Lincoln drove to the house of Senator Harjo, on the corner of Fifteenth and H streets, where Mrs. Harris and Maj. Henry H. Rathbone, a stepson of Hon. Mr. Harris, entered the carriage. They then drove on to the theatre, and pre-

pared to the State box already described. Hon. Mr. Lincoln took the cushioned arm-chair placed for him, Mrs. Lincoln occupying the seat next, while Miss Harris sat at the side, and Maj. Rathbone on the sofa behind her.

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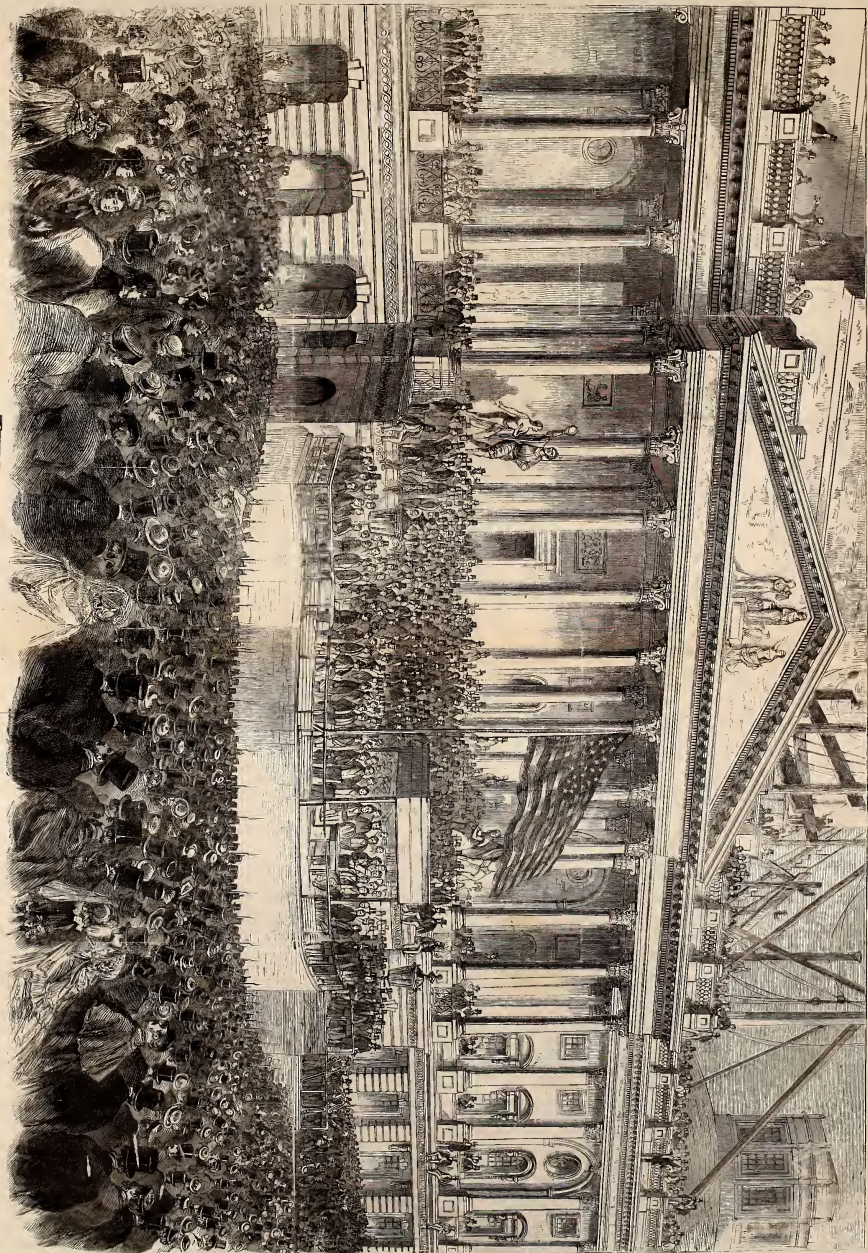


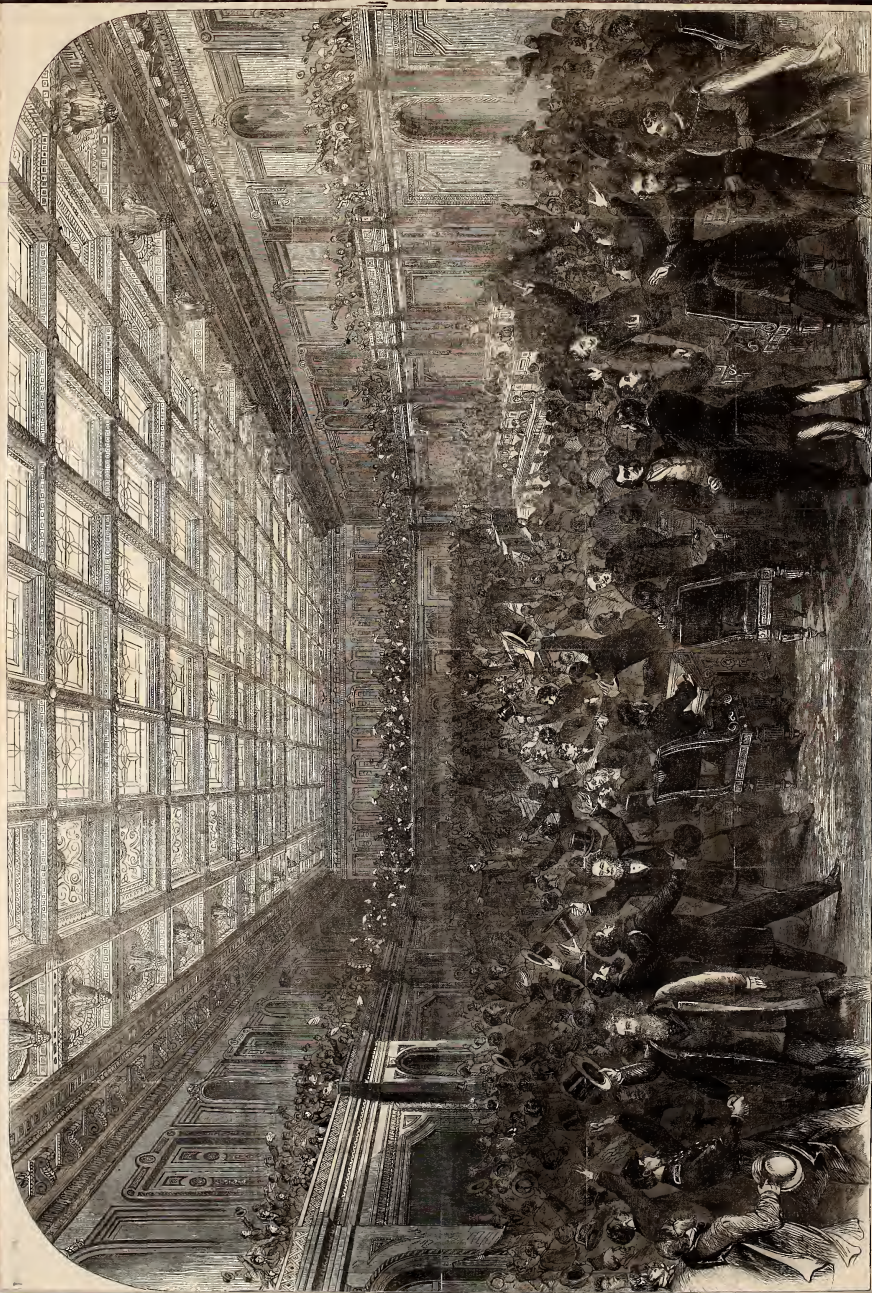
MR. LINCOLN RISING THE SEATS AND STRIDES OVER INDEPENDENCE HALL, FERRISBURGH.



MR. BUCHANAN AND MR. LINCOLN PROCEEDING TO THE CAPITO, MARCH 4, 1861.

1861. THE GREAT HALL OF CONGRESS AT WASHINGTON, D. C.





SCENE OF ENTERTAINMENT GIVEN BY THE AGE OF AMERICA, 1864.

